

Washington, DC – Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), Chairman of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, announced today that the House Armed Services Committee adopted his amendment to protect the religious liberty of all military servicemembers and military chaplains in particular. The amendment is in response to requests from military chaplain organizations who have reported an uptick in censorship and recriminations for chaplains and servicemembers who have moral or religious concerns about same-sex marriage. The issue has become particularly acute since the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell last year. The Akin religious liberty amendment was adopted by a vote of 36-25, and the committee approved the full bill after 2AM this morning.

Congressman Akin released the following statement:

"Yesterday the President announced his new position on same-sex marriage, and used the military as a campaign prop to advance the liberal agenda. Whatever Obama's views may be, I find it appalling that he would so blatantly use the military for political cover on this controversial issue. Our sons and daughters don't volunteer for the military to be used to promote a political agenda.

"This liberal agenda has infiltrated our military, where servicemembers and chaplains are facing recrimination for their sincerely held moral and religious beliefs. Moral or religious concerns about same-sex marriage or the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell have become potentially career-ending. Obama's use of the military to justify his new support for same-sex marriage will only add fuel to this fire, potentially forcing servicemembers and chaplains to violate their own conscience or face recriminations.

"For this reason, I offered an amendment last night to protect the religious liberty of military servicemembers and their chaplains. Our servicemembers are putting their life on the line for our country. We should not respond by limiting their religious freedom. These heroes are fighting to defend the Constitution and our freedom. We cannot allow their Constitutional freedoms to be violated."

The Akin amendment creates a statutory conscience protection clause for members of the military in general and military chaplains in particular. The amendment language was developed in conjunction with a number of Members of Congress, including Reps. Tim Huelskamp and

Steve Palazzo. In addition, the Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty strongly supported the amendment, and the Archbishop for Military Services explicitly endorsed the Akin amendment.

In 2011, Congressman Akin led the effort to fight back against gay marriage on military bases. Akin offered an amendment to H.R. 1540 which was stripped by the Senate.

The FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4310) was reported out of the House Armed Services Committee favorably and is expected to be considered on the House floor next week.

Amendment text: [AKIN_062_chaplain_xml.pdf](#)

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